

**Claims:**

Claims 1-13 (cancelled)

14. (Currently amended) A rubber compound for tire treads, the composition comprising:
- at least one elastomer; ~~containing a natural or synthetic rubber, and~~
  - ~~at least one high density metal oxide filler in an amount ranging from about 5 to about 80 phr wherein the high density metal oxide filler is bismuth trioxide having a density of greater than 5.7 g/cm<sup>3</sup>~~
  - from about 5 to about 80 parts by weight bismuth trioxide per 100 parts by weight elastomer; and
  - from about 30 to about 80 parts by weight carbon black per 100 parts by weight elastomer, where the carbon black is a tread-grade carbon black.

Claims 15-20 (Cancelled)

21. (New) A rubber composition for tire treads, the composition comprising:
- an elastomer;
  - from about 5 to about 80 parts by weight bismuth trioxide per 100 parts by weight elastomer; and
  - from about 30 to about 80 parts by weight carbon black per 100 parts by weight elastomer, where the carbon black is a tread-grade carbon black.
22. (New) A method for reducing the hysteretic loss of rubber vulcanizates that are used for tire treads, the method comprising:
- mixing an elastomer, a tread-grade carbon black, bismuth trioxide, and a vulcanizing agent to form a tread compound;
  - fabricating the tire compound into a green tread;
  - building a green tire by including the green tread; and
  - curing the green tire.
23. (New) An improved tire tread of the type that includes a vulcanized rubber having dispersed therein a tread-grade carbon black, the improvement comprising the presence of bismuth trioxide dispersed within the vulcanized rubber.

24. (New) The rubber composition of claim 21, where the bismuth trioxide has a density of greater than  $5.7 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .
25. (New) The method of claim 22, where the bismuth trioxide has a density of greater than  $5.7 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .
26. (New) The tire tread of claim 23, where the bismuth trioxide has a density of greater than  $5.7 \text{ g/cm}^3$ .
27. (New) The rubber composition of claim 21, further comprising silica filler.
28. (New) The method of claim 22, wherein said step of mixing includes mixing silica.
29. (New) The tire tread of claim 23, wherein the tire tread is of the type that further includes silica dispersed therein.
30. (New) A rubber composition for tire treads, the composition comprising:
  - an elastomer;
  - from about 5 to about 80 parts by weight bismuth trioxide per 100 parts by weight elastomer; and
  - from about 30 to about 80 parts by weight carbon black per 100 parts by weight elastomer, where the carbon black has a surface area of about  $119 \text{ m}^2/\text{g}$ .